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## ***COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA***

*Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy*

Division of Mines

P.O. Box 900

Big Stone Gap, Virginia 24219-0900

(276) 523-8100

Frank A. Linkous, Chief

### **MEMORANDUM DM 96-02**

DATE: January 17, 1996

TO: Coal Mine Operators and Independent Contractors

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_  
Frank A. Linkous

SUBJECT: General Coal Miner Certification

Section 45.1-161.37 of the Mine Safety Act requires that every person work in a Virginia surface or underground coal mine subsequent to January 1, 1996, must possess a general coal miner certificate issued by the Board of Coal Mining Examiners. The Board at its last meeting adopted procedures to begin issuing general coal miner certificates. Any person who has been employed to work in a coal mine in Virginia prior to that date may, but shall not be required to, hold a general coal miner certificate.

As a coal mine operator or independent contractor working at a Virginia coal mine, you are responsible under the Mine Safety Act to assure that all of your employees commencing after January 1, 1996, who are required to obtain a general coal miner certificate possess one issued by the Board. This requirement applies to any new inexperienced person entering the workforce, and to anyone moving to Virginia's coal mining industry from another state.

Employees of independent contractors who are involved in mining or processing of coal are subject to the general coal miner certification requirements. For example, if an explosives distributor provides services in loading and detonating blasts at a surface mine, then the distributor's employees will be required to meet the general coal miner certification requirements. However, persons engaged in delivery, office work, or non-mining or processing maintenance, service or construction work will not be required to meet the general coal miner certification requirements.

The procedures an applicant should follow to secure the general coal miner certification necessary forms are included as attachments to this memorandum.

Should you have questions concerning this new requirement of the Mine Safety Act, assistance in processing an application, please contact your Mine Inspector or your nearest Big Stone Gap (276) 523-8227; Keen Mountain Field Office (276) 498-4533.

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Attachment(s)

### **Requirements For General Coal Miner Certification**

The following procedures are to be followed to secure certification:

A. Applicants employed in Virginia coal mines **prior to January 1, 1996** who wish to become certified shall:

1. Submit Form [DM-BCME-1](#) (Revised 5/25/99), Application for Certification.
2. Submit a notarized Work Experience Form, DM-BCME-2 (Issued 2/1/96) verifying mining experience prior to January 1, 1996.
3. Pay a \$10.00 fee for certification.
4. Underground miners must pass the gas detection examination if they are not already gas detection qualified.

B. Applicants seeking certification **after January 1, 1996**, shall:

1. Submit Form DM-BCME-1 (Revised 5/25/99), Application for Certification.
2. Pay a \$10.00 fee for certification.
3. Submit documentation to the Division of Mines verifying completion of new miner training, newly employed experienced miner training, or annual refresher training. The training shall include highlights of the coal mine safety laws of Virginia and the coal mine safety and health regulations of the Division of Mines and the Board of Coal Mining Examiners. The training shall include a demonstration of knowledge or passing of a written examination on Virginia's coal mine safety laws and regulations.
4. Submit Form DM-BCME-3 (issued 5/22/96), Verification of Training completed for General Coal Miner Certification prior to commencing work in a coal mine. The form shall be signed by the employee and the instructor and the date they sign will be the effective date of the General Coal

Miner Certification.

5. Underground miners must pass the gas detection examination.

For information call Mary S. Gibson, Regulatory Boards Administrator, 276/523-8234.